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**Governor's Taskforce on School and Campus Safety**  
**2013 Recommendation Format**

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System

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**Submitted By**

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**Agency**

**Recommendation:** A budget allocation be made to support the sustainment of Crime Prevention and Safety Programs on Public Institutions of Higher Education campuses.

**Summary:** *Explain the legal, program and policy changes proposed. Describe actions involved and elaborate why the proposal is critical or important.*

Virginia's public higher education institutions have crime prevention programs and safety programs in place to protect their campus community. Unfortunately, these institutions often lack the funding to operate or sustain these programs. In addition, on campuses where there is no campus police department, campus security departments are unable to access vital training from the Department of Criminal Justice Services under their existing grant program. This recommendation would require a budget amendment to allocate funding to each public higher education institution in Virginia earmarked specifically for Crime Prevention and Safety Programs on campus.

**Background:** *Explain the history, including any relevant legislative history, relating to the issue or problem. Provide citation to data, research and other supporting materials relating to the recommendation.*

In an effort to determine how public institutions of higher education are sustaining their Crime Prevention and Safety Programs on campus, a survey was developed and distributed to Virginia's 39 public higher education institutions which includes both 2-year and 4-year institutions. Institutions across the Commonwealth were consistent in their areas of concern and the need for improvement. The findings revealed that the most persistent concern for institutions was the need for more crime prevention and safety awareness training for students, faculty, and staff. Crime prevention and safety awareness training addresses such topics as threat assessment, sexual assault prevention, alcohol awareness, personal safety, and theft prevention. The institutions that participated in the survey were asked to identify areas for improvement in their campus crime prevention and safety program and to provide cost estimates for addressing the areas of improvement they identified

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**Need:** *Explain the problem, issue or improvement and how the proposed recommendation will address it. Describe the anticipated results and objectives that your Work group expects to accomplish.*

Public institutions of higher education are required by §23-9.2:9 to provide crime prevention education and prevention programs on campus. There has been an increase in campus incidents since Virginia Tech and as a result, the need to provide timely warnings, more critical communications and more robust safety education has become a priority on all of Virginia's public higher education campuses. Public higher education institutions have limited budgets that must include staffing, equipment, notifications system maintenance and other requirements that don't always include crime prevention and safety programs.

Most recently, initiatives have called for a more all-hazards approach to preparedness, crime prevention, and safety. Since in most cases the institutions' budget for crime prevention and campus safety either stayed the same or increased, the request for funding clearly pointed toward support for existing programs rather than seed funding for new programs. It is evident from the findings of the survey that most institutions do have some funding for their programs but additional support is needed to expand and/or enhance their ability to reach more members of their campus community and to enable them to provide better and more consistent programming options.

An outstanding issue for the institutions is to determine how these programs should be funded going forward. Initially, there was some question as to whether or not colleges even had these types of programming in place and what the cost would be to assist them in creating crime prevention and safety programs. Now that there is confirmation of the existence of these programs, the question becomes how funding that is equitable yet substantial enough can be provided to help the institutions achieve their crime prevention and safety program goals. Providing funding support for these initiatives will allow for the strengthening and expansion of these critical programs that help to keep the campus communities across the state safe.

**Discussed Pros and Cons to Implementation of Recommendation(s):** *Explain arguments "for and "against" the proposal. What are some of the challenges in implementing the recommendation What groups are likely to support or oppose the recommendation and why?*

The anticipated challenge with implementing this recommendation is insufficient general funds to support the costs associated with the proposal. Out of that allocation, \$1.95 million would be allotted each year to the public higher education institutions at a rate of \$50,000 per institution for the biennium.

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**Proposed Amendment or Legislation:** *If the recommendation involves a change in the law, please provide a draft of the proposed changes to the Code of Virginia in the legislative bill format. Strike through language to be deleted and underline new language.*

A budget amendment would be required to establish the allocation of 3.9 million dollars that will support continued crime prevention and safety initiatives on public institution of higher education campuses. The budget request would be for \$1.95 million annually – for a total of \$3.9 million for the biennium.

**Fiscal Impact:** *Does this proposal require financial or personnel resources? If so, what are the estimates and what agencies, stakeholder groups, etc. are impacted? Will it generate revenue? If so, what is the estimate? Will a Budget Amendment be necessary? If so, what is the estimated cost?*

There is a fiscal impact associated with the implementation of this proposal

Crime Prevention and Safety programs at Virginia's public higher education institutions are in dire need of a funding allocation. A budget amendment would be required to allocate the necessary funds to each public higher education institution in Virginia. These funds should be earmarked specifically for Crime Prevention and Safety programs on campus.

There are 15 public 4-year higher education institutions and 24 public 2-year higher education institutions in Virginia. Keeping in mind the ongoing budget challenges of the state but understanding the crime prevention and safety crisis in our schools and on our college campuses, the following funding recommendation is proposed as a model to allocate and distribute crime prevention and safety support funds to all public higher education institutions in the Commonwealth. The survey findings indicated that the size of the college had no bearing on the amount of money needed to support their efforts. Since in most cases the institutions' budget for crime prevention and campus safety either stayed the same or increased, the request for funding clearly pointed toward support for existing programs rather than seed funding for new programs.

A crime prevention and safety fund in the amount of \$3.9 million dollars should be established for the upcoming 2014-2016 biennium. Out of that allocation, \$1.95 million would be allocated each year to the public higher education institutions at a rate of \$50,000 per institution. Based on the findings of the survey, the sum of \$50,000.00 per year for each institution for the next 2 years should provide the institutions with the necessary financial support to demonstrate measureable improvement in their crime prevention and safety programming such as increased educational and training opportunities for students, staff, and faculty; and more frequent training exercises with the campus community to increase awareness, responsibility and safety. The Department of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security has agreed to add additional questions on the annual Institution of Higher Education Agency Preparedness Assessment that will provide a means for colleges to account for how the allocated funds were spent on crime prevention and safety programs.

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**Result:** *Did the recommendation pass the workgroup?*

*When?*

*Taskforce?*

*When?*

*Were any concerns raised?*

*If so, what were they?*

*Was there any resulting legislation or budget amendment? If so, please identify by Code Section and bill number, or budget item number.*

**Next Steps:** *Are there any “next steps” associated with this recommendation?*

*If so, what agency (or agencies), stakeholder group, or other entity is responsible for these next steps?*

*Timeline for implementation:*

*Document prepared by:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Date* \_\_\_\_\_